

### TAKEAWAY:

When exhaustion silences everything else, God speaks softly enough to heal.

### INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS:

- Share a time when you felt completely burned out. What did recovery look like for you?
- Have you ever been a support for someone who has been burned out? How did you help them through that?
- Have you ever sat in silence, as a spiritual discipline, to listen for the whisper of God? What did that look like for you?

### UNDERSTANDING:

Have a group member read 1 Kings 19:1-18

- How did this sermon help you better understand this passage of scripture? Is there anything that was mentioned during the sermon that stuck out to you?
- Why do you think Elijah crashed so hard right after such a major victory?
- How did God care for Elijah differently than you might expect?
- Why do you think God spoke in a whisper instead of the wind, earthquake, or fire (v. 12)?
- How does God's gentleness toward Elijah reshape your view of Him?

### APPLICATION:

- What might God be whispering to you about the next season? Is your life too full of noise and distraction to hear Him?
- What practical step can you take this week to create space for God's quiet voice?
- Where do you need rest more than answers right now?

### GO DEEPER:

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material.

You can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting and to deepen your study of our text from this week. Here are two "Going Deeper" discussion prompts that build upon the above provided questions without repeating them:

- **The Biblical Theme of Isolation:** God often does deep spiritual work in our hearts when we experience isolation or even we *think* we are alone, but in reality are not.
  - Elijah's perception of reality ("I alone am left") was factually wrong and distorted (God had 7,000 others). Read 1 Kings 18:1-4; 1 Kings 19:18.
  - How can burnout distort our view of reality?

- Read Exodus 3:1-4; How does God work in Moses' life during his forty years of isolation in the wilderness of Midian? In what way(s) does isolation in the wilderness prepare Moses for what is to come?
- Read 1 Samuel 23:14-15; Psalm 63; David is anointed as the next king of Israel, but instead finds himself isolated in the wilderness. Why would God allow this to happen in David's life? How does this experience mirror Elijah's experience on Mount Horeb? What does God teach David about His character when David is running for his life?
- Read Matthew 4:1-11; Here we read that Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested. How does isolation test our faith? How did Jesus' time in the wilderness prepare Him for the work ahead?
- Have you ever gone through a period of isolation? What has God done in your heart to prepare you for the ministry and work that He has set aside for you?
- **Elijah's Crises of Faith:** Read 1 Kings 18-19
  - Elijah transitions from his public victory on Mount Carmel (1 Ki 18) to his private crisis of faith at Mount Horeb (1 Ki 19). Why the sudden shift for Elijah?
  - God doesn't deal harshly with Elijah but rather, in a multitude of ways helps him out of his crisis. What are these ways? For example, God gives him a job to do (anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha). How does having a purpose play a vital part of healing from depression? How and why does shifting our eyes from our internal pain to an external mission help break the cycle of despair? How has God helped you when in a similar situation?
  - The repetition of the exact same question and answer (1 Ki 19:9-10; 13-14) may serve as a literary device to reveal Elijah's internal state during this crisis. Elijah's first answer likely is a complaint; his second a confession of his limitations and "stuck" perspective. Do you agree? If not, why? What significance does vv. 11-12 and 17-18 play in your answer?
  - In his answer to God's question, Elijah uses the full covenant title for God: "the LORD, the God of Hosts" while simultaneously claiming, "I, even I only, am left" (vv. 10, 14).
  - What does this name mean? (In your answer mention both Hannah's and David's use of it (1 Sam 1:3, 11; 17:45). A modified form of it is used in 2 Sam 5:9-10 to explain why David flourished. Why does Elijah use it and not another? How might this name for God have relevance in your petitions? Why might you "praise" this aspect of God (Matt 6:9)?
  - If the LORD is the "God of Hosts" whose altars are being destroyed, it might look like God is losing. Have you ever felt that the "God of Hosts" was asleep at the wheel while bad things were happening? How do you reconcile this title with times when evil seems to be winning?
  - Was Elijah's use of this name of God an act of faith (reminding himself of God's power), an expression of bitterness (accusing God's army of being absent), or something else? When we feel isolated, do we tend to view God as unable to help, unaware (Jesus sleeping in the boat), unengaged (able to help but choosing not to), or something else? How do these particular views of God shape our prayer life? Our state of mind during crises?
  - Zechariah 4:6 states, "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts." How does this truth relate to 1 Kings 19? In your answer, but there are other parallels, you may want to contrast the wind or earthquake verses God's whisper. "Trying to do the Lord's work in your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting, and tedious of all work. But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you." – Corrie Ten Boom
- **Quotes:**

- "Elijah was a man of like passions with us; he failed in his faith, yet God did not cast him off. He fed him by an angel, he spoke to him in a whisper... This teaches us that even the strongest believers may have their seasons of darkness and depression, and that God deals with them not in anger, but in tender mercy." - John Wesley
- "God can do the spectacular (the fire on Carmel), but the Lord of Hosts is most dangerous to the enemy when He works in the secret hearts of a remnant (the 7,000). The noise is for the public; the whisper is for the transformation." – A. W. Tozer
- "The cure for Elijah's depression was a new commission. God said, 'Go, return on thy way.' Activity is the best medicine for melancholy. To sit down and brood over our sorrows is to increase them; to rise up and serve our God is the way to disperse them." – Charles Spurgeon
- "There is no panic in Heaven! God has no problems, only plans... The Lord of Hosts has not lost control simply because His prophet has lost his nerve." – Corrie ten Boom
- "The title 'Lord of Hosts' asserts God's sovereignty over all powers–earthly kings like Ahab and cosmic forces like Baal. By using it, Elijah is asserting that reality is not defined by Jezebel's threats, but by Yahweh's armies. The tragedy is that he said the words but didn't feel the truth of them." – G. K. Beale

## PRAYER:

Pray for rest for the weary, for permission to slow down, and for ears to hear God's gentle voice above all the noise.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISE:

Practice the Whisper: Intentionally set aside 20 minutes of silence this week. ***No phone, no music, no agenda.*** Just sit quietly and listen for what God might whisper to your heart.